

PÉPÉ

ANARCHY IS ORDER

**“A political program has value
insofar as it -rising above vague
generalities- makes clear precisely
which organization it proposes to
replace those it wants to overthrow
or reform.”**

(Michael Bakunin in ‘Writings against Marx’)



PRINCIPLES, PROPOSITIONS &

DISCUSSIONS FOR LAND & FREEDOM

FOREWORD

Time after time I think about how different things could have been if I didn't get into contact with people and groups that made it possible for me to become what I became. No matter how you look at it, personal contacts and individual experience are the main factors in one's (political) formation and evolution. Why did I become an anarchist? By chance and by need. What else would I have become? I never planned on becoming an anarchist.

Standing up from falling down (again) I moved on. I've been enchanted and I've been disgusted by the anarchist movement; I cursed the people and missed them; hated them and loved them. I've had dreams and been in despair. Said farewell and received people and ideas with open arms. I've been smart and I've been an ass.

In short I was little different from anybody else, but each has his path and each path has its ways. Anarchism has been my path for more than half my life now, at first vague and instinctive, later a bit more rational and with more doubts about some things. Because I had the feeling that a lot of things weren't going as well as they could go –and certainly as good as they should–, that the movement didn't use its full potential and that there were no platforms to discuss this –far beside from changing them together, I started reading, thinking and discussing in small circles.

What you have before you now is the result of years in the anarchist desert and my way to answer the pale and the petty. This is an invitation to all involved to gather up arms and wrap them around each other. There is no time to lose. This is my invitation not to let go. Anarchism or barbarism. Anarchy is Order.

This is a proposition to the anarchist movement at large. Where do we go from here? Don't mourn, organize! Because I think we need both go back to basics about our theory as to find a new reality, a new practice. Words are not enough, but a good beginning.

Pépé November 2004.

AN INTRODUCTORY WORD TO THE
'ANARCHIVE'
"Anarchy is Order!"

*I must Create a System or be enslav'd by
another Man's.*

*I will not Reason & Compare: my business
is to Create'*
(William Blake)

During the 19th century, anarchism has developed as a result of a social current which aims for freedom and happiness. A number of factors since World War I have made this movement, and its ideas, disappear little by little under the dust of history.

After the classical anarchism - of which the Spanish Revolution was one of the last representatives-a 'new' kind of resistance was founded in the sixties which claimed to be based (at least partly) on this anarchism. However this resistance is often limited to a few (and even then partly misunderstood) slogans such as 'Anarchy is order', 'Property is theft',...

Information about anarchism is often hard to come by, monopolised and intellectual; and therefore visibly disappearing. The 'anarchival' or 'anarchist archive' Anarchy is Order (in short **A.O**) is an attempt to make the '**principles, propositions and discussions**' of this tradition available again for anyone it concerns. We believe that these texts are part of our own heritage. They don't belong to publishers, institutes or specialists.

These texts thus have to be available for all anarchists and other people interested. That is one of the conditions to give anarchism a new impulse, to let the 'new anarchism' outgrow the slogans.

This is what makes this project relevant for us: we must find our roots to be able to renew ourselves. We have to learn from the mistakes of our socialist past. History has shown that a large number of the anarchist ideas remain standing, even during the most recent social-economic developments.

‘Anarchy Is Order’ does not make profits, everything is spread at the price of printing- and papercosts. This of course creates some limitations for these archives.

Everyone is invited to spread along the information we give . This can be done by copying our leaflets, printing texts from the CD (collecting all available texts at a given moment) that is available or copying it, e-mailing the texts to friends and new ones to us,... Become your own anarchivist!!!

(Be aware though of copyright restrictions. We also want to make sure that the anarchist or non-commercial printers, publishers and authors are not being harmed. Our priority on the other hand remains to spread the ideas, not the ownership of them.)

The anarchivist offers these texts hoping that values like **freedom, solidarity and direct action** get a new meaning and will be lived again; so that the struggle continues against the

*“...demons of flesh and blood, that sway scepters
down here;
and the dirty microbes that send us dark diseases
and wish to
squash us like horseflies;
and the will-’o-the-wisp of the saddest ignorance.”*
(L-P. Boon)

The rest depends as much on you as it depends on us. Don’t mourn, Organise!

Comments, questions, criticism, cooperation can
be sent to A.O@advalvas.be or on
www.anarchyisorder.org.

A complete list and updates are available on this
address, new texts are always

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A CALL TO ARMS

1. ANARCHISM.

A. 'DEFINING' ANARCHISM

"To be GOVERNED is to be watched, inspected, spied upon, directed, law-driven, numbered, regulated, enrolled, indoctrinated, preached at, controlled, checked, estimated, valued, censured, commanded, by creatures who have neither the right nor the wisdom nor the virtue to do so. To be GOVERNED is to be at every operation, at every transaction noted, registered, counted, taxed, stamped, measured, numbered, assessed, licensed, authorized, admonished, prevented, forbidden, reformed, corrected, punished. It is, under pretext of public utility, and in the name of the general interest, to be place[d] under contribution, drilled, fleeced, exploited, monopolized, extorted from, squeezed, hoaxed, robbed; then, at the slightest resistance, the first word of complaint, to be repressed, fined, vilified, harassed, hunted down, abused, clubbed, disarmed, bound, choked, imprisoned, judged, condemned, shot, deported, sacrificed, sold, betrayed; and to crown all, mocked, ridiculed, derided, outraged, dishonored. That is government; that is its justice; that is its morality. (...) O human personality! How can it be that you have cowered in such subjection for sixty centuries?"

(P.-J. Proudhon, *General Idea of the Revolution in the Nineteenth Century*, translated by John Beverly Robinson (London: Freedom Press, 1923), pp. 293-294.)

If I were asked to answer the following question: 'WHAT IS SLAVERY?' and I should answer in one word, 'IT IS MURDER', my meaning would be understood at once. No extended argument would be required to show that the power to take from a man his thought, his will, his personality, is a power of life and death; and that to enslave a man is to kill him. Why, then, to this other question: 'WHAT IS PROPERTY!' may I not likewise answer, IT IS ROBBERY, without the certainty of being misunderstood; the second proposition being no other than a transformation of the first? (Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, 'What Is Property?')

Anarchism (from the Gr. ἀν, and ἀρχη, contrary to authority) is the name given to a principle or theory of life and conduct under which society is conceived without government - harmony in such a society being obtained, not by submission to law, or by obedience to any authority, but by free agreements concluded between the various groups, territorial and professional, freely constituted for the sake of production and consumption, as also for the satisfaction of the infinite variety of needs and aspirations of a civilized being. In a society developed on these lines, the voluntary associations which exist already now begin to

cover all the fields of human activity would take a still greater extension so as to substitute themselves for the state in all its functions. They would represent an interwoven network, composed of an infinite variety of groups and federations of all sizes and degrees, local, regional, national and international temporary or more or less permanent - for all possible purposes: production, consumption and exchange, communications, sanitary arrangements, education, mutual protection, defence of the territory, and so on; and, on the other side, for the satisfaction of an ever-increasing number of scientific, artistic, literary and sociable needs. Moreover, such a society would represent nothing immutable. On the contrary - as is seen in organic life at large - harmony would (it is contended) result from an ever-changing adjustment and readjustment of equilibrium between the multitudes of forces and influences, and this adjustment would be the easier to obtain as none of the forces would enjoy a special protection from the state.

(Kropotkin in "Anarchism", from *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1910.

"All men are equal and free: society by nature, and destination, is therefore autonomous and ungovernable. If the sphere of activity of each citizen is determined by the natural division of work and by the choice he makes of a profession, if the social functions are

combined in such a way as to produce a harmonious effect, order results from the free activity of all men; there is no government. Whoever puts a hand on me to govern me is an usurper and a tyrant; I declare him my enemy."

(From 'Les Confessions d'un Revolutionnaire', 1849)

"[The French Revolution], that started her sublime work with the 'Declaration of the Rights of Men', would only have completed this work when she had -not only in your country but over the whole surface of the earth- built the society bases on justice, a society that has to guarantee each of her members, men and women, equality from birth in so far as this equality depends on social organization, without taking into account the natural difference between individuals; a society that -economically and socially- offers each equal real opportunities to reach - according to abilities to work en powers- the highest peaks of being human, first by education and instruction, then by one's own work, freely in groups or not -labour with muscles as well as with the sinews, hand and head, the only valid source of all personal, non-hereditary property which will eventually be regarded as the main basis of all political and social rights. (...)

We are socialists." (M. Bakoenin)

Revolution is the creation of new living institutions, new groupings, new social relationships, it is the destruction of privileges and monopolies; it is the new spirit of justice, of brotherhood, of freedom which must renew the whole of social life, the moral level and the material conditions of the masses by calling on them to provide, through their direct and conscious action, for their own future.

Revolution is the organization of all public services by those who work in them in their own interest as well as the public's;

Revolution is the destruction of all coercive ties; it is the autonomy of groups, of communes, of regions;

Revolution is the free federation brought about by a desire for brotherhood, by individual and collective interests, by the needs of production and defence;

Revolution is the constitution of innumerable free groupings based on ideas, wishes, and tastes of all kinds that exist among the people;

Revolution is the forming and disbanding of thousands of representative, district, communal, regional, national bodies which, without having any legislative power; serve to make known and to coordinate the desires and interests of people near and far and which act through information, advice and example.

Revolution is freedom proved in the crucible of facts -and lasts so long as freedom lasts, that is until others, taking advantage of the weariness that overtakes the masses, of the inevitable disappointments that follow exaggerated hopes, of the probable errors and human faults, succeed in constituting a power;

which supported by and army of conscripts of mercenaries, lay s down the law, arrests the movement at the point it has reached, and them begins the reaction.

Errico Malatesta (From back cover of 'Life and ideas' , a collection by Vernon Richards)

B. ANARCHIST VIEW ON THE WORLD:

There are a few 'factors' that have made the world what it is now; they've had at least a directing influence on it. Without trying to be complete:

Church, religion, philosophy: a direct and psychological influence on society;

Formation of the state, nationalist competition and the repression of the 'interior enemy';

The rise and primate of the capital to the disadvantage of the hereditary nobility;

Technology, creation of the (working) masses and work ethics and the extension of transport;

The elaboration of mass-communication, P.R. and propaganda, censorship;

Intensive use of more and more sources (human, natural, animal), territorial expansion trough colonisation (politically, military and economically / financially).

All of the above have had their influence on the psychological / individual, social / economical and political situation

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C. ANARCHIST VALUES / PRINCIPLES.

It is to be said that to anarchists, the ends must be equal to the means. Anarchist groups don't believe (in contradiction to some political 'rivals') that opposite goals and means can lead to a satisfactory result or process. For example, if you want to emancipate others you can't force them. The century-old viewpoint 'The working-class has to liberate itself' is certainly to be kept high.

The importance of the pillars such as direct action, solidarity, self-government, direct democracy, anti-authority, freedom...is huge. They are the support, the red line trough, for and off the organization of anarchist groups. They are in the first place guidelines, principles, from which the rest can be deducted. They are the borders within which the entire organization is constructed and remains functioning. To make them real is what's important in the external and internal communication. In the daily organization the integration of these pillars in an individual and collective attitude is more important than following rules and prescriptions.

a. Freedom

There are two forms of freedom: 'freedom of' and 'freedom to'. (Fromm, E.) The first is not really freedom; it's a negative definition. 'The world is free of starvation', but can everybody freely decide what they are going to eat, how it will be prepared, how it will be produced...? The latter is 'freedom to', a positive freedom which asks for a stage of autonomy, the possibility to decide and to act out decisions.

Fromm states that the absence of 'freedom to' will lead to pathological viewing-points (psychologically and socially) which have to lead inevitably to fascism.

Here we are not talking about a philosophical view on freedom. We want to give it a real meaning, without playing word games. We are aware that absolute 'freedom to' does not exist. There are always borders to freedom, practical borders as well as the borders set by other people. What's the value of freedom if it serves to hurt someone else?

b. Direct action

Important is that the ends and the means are set and reached by those concerned. The means have to lead directly to the ends. It cannot make detours to for example the press or the authorities. 'Civil' disobedience is in its numerous shapes a good example of how an unjust law can be charged by simply ignoring it by acting in the way we feel is just. A distinction should be made between direct action and symbolic action. Symbolic action is always meant as a signal to the people or organizations that are in power, whose authority one therefore acknowledges.

It's not so that symbolic action isn't an option. But we start from the presumption that it won't change things fundamentally. Choosing which method of action and strategy to use is of course also a matter of practical achievability, priorities, etc....

c. Solidarity

Solidarity is aid or support between two human beings who feel equal to each other, who recognise each other's situation. Solidarity excludes paternalism, neither does it stand for the 'support' of those who have no power to those who do. On the contrary, it means that solidary people support each other on bases of free will and own initiative, because of connecting ends and interests: I am you and you are me, who touches you, touches me.

In other words, the relation formed must have a mutual character, be based on dialogue, coming from a shared responsibility for society worldwide. Because of this responsibility there is a common ground, next to variety. The first conditions are that ends, interest and contribution are mutual. Further on, this demands a broadening of the partners involved in the cooperation. A last element is the mutual credibility of the partners.

The first condition: the ends are mutual; the relation does not have the intention that aid is given by only one side. Both partners won't to change something in their situation, want to learn something by getting involved in the relationship.

Secondly: the interests are mutual, both often not identical. Interests are situated on material grounds or rather on the grounds of humanitarian values or political ideals, or on both grounds.

A following condition is that the relationship has to construct to the situation of both partners, there is profit on both sides, both learn something, both get new ideas,...

d. Self-governance

Everybody must have (take: freedom cannot be given, only taken) complete autonomy in his/her activities, also and especially within collectives and between collectives. On the other hand, these self-governing collectives (autonomous collectives) can't deny autonomy to 'outsiders'.

The aim for self-governance works in two directions. On one hand it stipulates an (as large as possible) autonomy of every entity (individual, group, organization,...) and on the other hand an (as large as possible) decentralisation. Cooperation is only considered when this is relevant (for comfort, pleasure or necessity). The rest of the 'pillars' clearly present a confederative structure, in which separate units don't lose their autonomy.

On the other hand it also brings the responsibility for 'oneself' to the attention: it's in the first place the responsibility of the entity for itself. To achieve this the entities must provide in their own means, strategies,... Of course we cannot separate this pillar from what is said about solidarity;... Considering that freedom must be taken (it cannot be given) it speaks for itself that the entity must decide for itself what is offered and demanded in the social transaction. These kinds of transactions also require self-discipline: forced or sanctioned solidarity is no solidarity at all. All this is also the case for economic matters.

e. Direct Democracy

Within anarchist groups decisions are taken by (real) consensus. On a broader sociological scale it means the same: the basis decides because there is no top. This basis must have the means for this at all times (in other words: arrange themselves in such a way that they indeed have these means).

Consensus decision-making is not the only possible model of direct democracy. In other situations people can choose to use representation or even voting, people can work with or without veto's (sometimes a number of veto's can be needed to effectively stop a proposition), people can agree to respect and act out the decision of the majority,...

In the same manner there can be numerous ways to have such a meeting. There are different roles that can or cannot be taken up (facilitator, note taker, time-keeper, preparation-group,...). The 'rituals' within the meeting can also be self-made: codes to signal you want to say something, make a 'technical remark' about the process (requesting a break, suggesting a solution,...) or a question to make a proposal clearer,...

What's most important is the attempt to have as many (in fact all) partners working together towards a solution that leads to a win-win situation for all partners (see 'solidarity').

Who could represent your ideas better than yourself?

Depending on the situation this ideal-type must be changed (while the autonomy of each entity -person, group,...- is carefully watched).

f. Anti-authoritarianism

An anti-authoritarian bias can be found within the processes as well as in the social project. No one can be freed by another. Authority (in the sense of power¹, not so much in the sense of knowledge, experience,... as far as they don't become or remain power) is looked upon as a problem rather than a solution. This principle most often gives discussion with non-anarchists at large; it is the one that sets anarchists apart most.

Most certainly on the level of society it meets many frowns. Still anarchists think that repressing deviatory behaviour is often no solution as behaviour points at social structures that go wrong. In short we can say that:

1. Repression does not really and fundamentally alter behaviour

¹ ? There is a lot of confusion about words like power, hierarchy, prestige, authority, freedom, autonomy,...

Without trying to be final about it I use the following definitions: freedom from something (negative freedom) is e.g. not being hungry; freedom to something (positive freedom) is being able & capable to (do, be,...) something and resembles autonomy and strength. Prestige and authority are constantly confused and interused and can carry a meaning of power as well as trust in someone with more knowledge, experience,... about this particular issue. In the first sense the (authoritarian, hierarchical) relation (between people) is institutional and enforceable, while in the second it is a free choice to trust or not and limited in time, space, subject,... I suggest using the word 'power' only in the sense of authority and hierarchy; 'being capable of...' and 'being able to...' would be better described as (positive) freedom, autonomy, strength,...

2. The causes for particular behaviour tend to disappear out of sight and out of hand.

Of course it is hard to imagine a world without sanctioning. Even the anarchist movement today is not free from it, even when there is little open or formal authority. By making this kind of authority formal it is easier handled or ignored, so formalising it has pro's and contra's.

D. MISSION STATEMENT: STRATEGICAL GOALS / MISSION.

"The anarchist movement (her members and supporters) wants
to bring information and discussion
(education) and meeting (networking) and
action (activation) to organizations, individuals
and suppliers
in an efficient, clear, effective and honest
manner
through her information centres, food kitchens
and the activities, infrastructure, knowledge,
support and know-how of the organizations
and individuals, her actions, her information-
bulletins,...
in return for financial, material and moral
support, feedback and self-activity
in order to contribute to a fundamental social
change
which is based on 'freedom, self-governance,
direct action, solidarity, direct democracy and
anti-authoritarian living'.
Anarchy is Order.

And:

From the 18th century, anarchism evolved as a way of working towards freedom and happiness. A combination of things has covered much of these ideas with the dust of history, blood and tears.

“We try to grow into individual and social ‘defense’ and ‘attack’ against injustice (sexism, racism, war, exploitation, unfreedom, ...) and the systems of power over others in general.

Social defence is the response of solidary individuals and communities to undesired events in the outside world as disaster, military coup, financial market crashes, war, AIDS,...

Attack means taking the initiative: we want another world and we are the ones to make it. (Why don't we set a date to it?)

We will make it acting on principles as freedom/autonomy/anti-authoritarianism, solidarity, direct action.

In a world like ours, it's important to know which side you're trying to be on, without needing a promised utopia, a Kingdom Come. Anarchism is an ongoing process, never a standstill.” (A.O mission statement)

The anarchist archive ‘Anarchy is Order’ is one of the attempts to make the original resources available. We try to archive and learn from anarchist texts and spread them; we try to offer education to individuals and groups, to activate them, bond them and be a catalysing factor.

Let's bring anarchism to life. So that values like freedom, solidarity and direct action get new meaning, are lived again and the battle continues against the *'demons of flesh and blood, that sway scepters down here; and the dirty microbes that send us dark diseases and wish to squash us like horseflies; and the will-'o-the-wisp of the saddest ignorance'*. (L-P. Boon)

2. ENDS AND MEANS

WORKING FIELDS FOR THE ANARCHIST MOVEMENT.

Murray Bookchin uses a diagram to make the working fields of the anarchist movement clear. I use his diagram in a different way than he does. Where he tries to find arguments to favour one of them, I try to see how we can combine them. Through history and varying from person to person the anarchist movement has laid different accents and created different tools (action methods as well as organizational forms and principles) to address different realities and priorities that all have value in their own right. It is meaningless to set them up against each other.

1. STATE (parliamentary democracy, dictatorship,...)	4. POLITICS (direct democracy,...)
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2. (WAGE-)LABOUR & CONSUMPTION (developmental aid, consumption)	5. SOCIAL CAPITAL
3. PERSONAL SPHERE (classical or culturally adapted)	6. PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL (experimental or culturally new or different)

In the diagram the upper row (1 and 4) contains the public sphere: the common interest, human dignity,... The last rows (2, 3, 5, 6) contains the private sphere: survival, self-interest, particularism, sociability,...

The last row (3, 6) stands for the search for a safe home, happiness,...

Roughly spoken the left half is 'how it is'. The right side is the (anarchist?) conquering of space, the fulfilling of reality ourselves.

Forms of 'psychological capital' (even if the struggle is collective) can be: alternative ways of housing and living, women's liberation, anti-authoritarian education, sexual liberation, gay liberation,...

Examples of 'social capital' include the economical: cooperative working, LETS,... but also free schools, cultural initiatives,...

The 'political side' are suspected in the organizational principles of anarchist groups, the green parties in their begin-stadium, action-groups,...

Fundamentally, I see it as a question of survival that the anarchist movement reaches all fields at the same time and therefore uses as many methods as possible : if we don't

cooperate or make room for the various preferences and priorities, the anarchist movement will remain as it is now : nothing!

In short, this means :

1) Create a place where people can meet, where they can talk about strategy, means, activities,...and where they can gather information that can be made useable. At the same time a common infrastructure is gathered there (computers, internet-connection, archives,...). Squats, info shops and magazine can have a part in this.

2) In these (or other) places actions can be put together and prepared: we can learn how to have meetings, how to plan and execute our actions; how to (or not to) approach the press. In these places we have to get involved in our communities instead of spitting on them while staring ourselves blind on the history of the world.

3) We are looking for contact with equal minded individuals to handle bigger projects and exchange experience and information about the various themes that we are occupied in.

4) We organise a local deliberation with the groups we want involved (to keep each other informed and to help each other) and with as many individuals as possible. The group has to split up when more and more people join in, and organise itself in the local districts according to where the members of the group live. Of course deliberations between towns remain, as well as contacts with the 'outside'.

5) We organise ourselves in the places where we work, the unions will be one of the themegroups, with deliberation per theme and geographically (they have to consult the surrounding communities too). When the old system disappears (because of a stockmarket crash or because of a revolution) this union has to take over production and distribution, and it must not tolerate new bosses. In the mean time collectives and cooperatives can be started to gain experience with non - hierarchic organization of production and distribution.

In general money, printing presses...and so on have to be collected. Knowledge and know-how must be parted and training and solidarity must be organised (for example to be activated at special occasions as big conferences,...)

We must help each other cast off the influence of capitalism on ourselves. We must put aside our insecurities en the related swollen egos. More than anything else this forming of personality is the result and hottest battlefield of the diffuse fascism/ the way we meet, organise, write, talk, make pamphlets,... There is a (diffuse) fascist pig in each of us that must be killed.

A. STRATEGIC ENDS

1. General

In relation to the evolution of organizations (e.g. size,...) and the world around it (chances and threats) we must be able to switch easily between different organizational forms, decision- and deliberation structures,...

Each group must also permanently try to combine different strategies and levels of operation.

Each individual remains autonomous. No one can be forced to do anything. No one can stop anyone from doing anything. These are the decision-making starting points. As wide as possible REAL consensus is necessary to make decisions useful.

a. Ends

The developing of strategies of course presumes in the first place the draw up of ends. This is the case for every individual, for every group and for the movement as a whole. The ends have to be stated on a short, medium long and long (or strategical, tactical, and operational) bases.

In the present situation this stating of ends is our first priority.

To make this possible platforms must be created on a local, national, international and thematical bases.

These also have to serve to make education and solidarity possible.

b. Strategy

I would like to point out the different parts that the strategy of every individual, every group, the movement as a whole must contain.

“There are at least three ways of dealing with a situation.

You can neutralise, activate or destroy. Neutralising is creating space. Activating is gaining support. Destroying is winning. What’s more: it’s essential to learn how to use those three at the same time. (...)

The answer (the method of struggle) must contain three elements

a way to survive

a way to exploit cracks in the enemy-camp

an underground strategy.”

The different ‘facets’ will all need a proper strategy with own priorities and tactics. Here it’s important that the ends are clearly formulated and that we stay true to them. It is also important that we keep on nourishing a mutual trust and that we keep considering the different strategies as ‘variations on a theme’, within which everyone can keep their identity, but at the same time everything remains discussable.

Another aspect of strategy is to make sure that the anarchist movement can gain from the efforts of its work. Too often others (NGO’s, trotskyists, authoritarian individuals,...) will steal the results of our work. We have to keep the initiative in our own hands.

c. Enemy

The enemy is easy to sum up in general terms: relations of power in all kinds of forms and situations. ‘There is a cop in everyone of us... he must be killed.’

d. Networking

The gaining and activation of support is of great importance. In the first place I consider gaining support from the 'population' or the specific target group of the anarchist groups and the entire movement.

On the other hand there is also the networking aspect: which social organizations can be of value in what kind of alliance and which organizations should be avoided as much as possible?

Above I have formulated a number of statements about this. It is important to stipulate that alliances should be a well considered true choice (based on voluntary association) and that they should be at least compatible with the ends, and ideally should bring the ultimate goal as close as possible.

e. Information, discussion and encounter (internal and external)

Here it's important that infrastructure is made real: the 'possibility to' and the 'invitation to'.

f. Safety

Safety and providing for this safety have a number of different aspects:

- there's the safety of 'contents' (ends, reformism,...);
- there's always the danger of the internal process being disturbed by people of good will (for a number of political and personal reasons) as well as by people who try to cause harm to the organization by acting as 'provocateurs' or 'informants'.

The latter can come from all kinds of governmental or private organizations, but also from political rivals.

Safety must be made real within the group itself as well as within cooperatives, platforms, Ways have got to be found to deal with this without creating a sectarian paranoia.

In short, we always have to take into account the following:

juridical freedom (judgement of and preparedness to the possible consequences)

quality of process and quality of results (in capitalist terms: efficiency and effectiveness).

According to me, a large part of the answer is situated in training (juridical and in terms of management aspects such as discussion techniques, financial clearvoyance...).

Next to that I also believe in clear procedures and agreements: what will be acted out in what way, who plays which role and has what function, what happens when there's a conflict,...?

g. Solidarity

An important reason to organise is undoubtedly the need for solidarity and cooperation. This need can be felt in all aspects and all 'levels' (thematically, locally, regionally, nationally and globally).

Solidarity can take a number of forms, but is always linked with those aspects and levels. Solidarity should not only exist within the separate groups, it should also exist between them. Solidarity means next to coping together with setbacks and repression also a positive view on the world and supporting

others to start acting, individually as well as collectively.

Many forms of solidarity have to be consciously organised and cannot depend on coincidence or goodwill. This becomes very clear when we look at 'international' solidarity. This can take form in local solidarity actions, mobilising people to go help others elsewhere, provide infrastructure and logistical support, help financially, offer training and education,...

Every group or organization has to consider how this solidarity can be integrated best. Furthermore this offers the opportunity to come out with the group and the themes that need funding. It seems useful to harbour a part of the funding in specific supporting organizations, which can use them further on.

2. Facets

a. Individual / psychological capital

On the individual surface the attention should be given to 'deprogramming', the education of each other (in personal matters but also concerning theory and methods of action).

Practical solidarity too must be made real through affinity groups (non- official ties of friendship).

Trough the other 'facets' we have to achieve all kinds of education, which enables the autonomous functioning within and without the movement. Life as a revolutionary anarchist has a lot of consequences in our

psychology, the social life, life on the work floor,...

On the other hand various more or less formal projects can be started; such as free schools, alternative ways of life and living, sexual liberation, anti-authoritarian upbringing,...

b. Thematical actions

Next to all this attention should definitely be given too the various themes and action-movement can choose as subject. This aspect has been most researched within the movement, even so that 'activism' i.e. seems to be a description of a new ideology in the traditional media.

It would be stupid not to elaborate this aspect further. The strongest points of the movement have to be kept. The anarchist movement has in many places a monopoly of knowledge, know-how and action-experience on many fields. This aspect of the anarchist movement (the fact that it acts, and acts well) makes her one of the few treats for the existing order, especially because the movement doesn't negotiate and therefore seems uncontrollable.

We've mentioned before that the multiplicity of themes and the separate action groups around them don't support the unity of the movement but lead us to the fragmentation of it.

There must be follow-up of concrete themes by the collectives. These collectives can gather information and even start action campaigns, while they can mobilise and organise within the other structures.

The collectives must be confederated geographically per theme and they should discuss 'interthematic' as well, concerning contents, techniques and practices with each other. Here they can work with representants of regional groups. At least communication structures should be set up.

There are two examples:

- common infrastructure, training / education, magazine / promotion,...
- classical themes such as environment, refugees, repression, feminism, information.

c. Politics

Anarchist groups should be founded regionally, they should split up after they've reached a certain number of members and if wanted should work in a smaller region. These groups are independent but are confederated with each other. For this we refer to the 'Liberal Municipalism' of Murray Bookchin.

What's most important is to build a parallel decision making structure, which can first of all bring decision-making back home by simply deciding things and acting accordingly. On the other hand we can demand official political levels to grant us certain claims (e.g. certain urgent issues we simply cannot address to ourselves). Purpose and strategy must be clear for every-one if we want to avoid ruptures later on or people feeling betrayed.

To get to the point, I suggest that this grows from the deliberation structures between the action groups and the infrastructure groups, with the general idea that as many people

possible are present (every group or organization can send a representant for the communication between the groups, next to that room is made for decisions of anarchist individuals who want to work together).

It's handy to use one or more themes as a stepping stone on which propositions should be made and results gained: an intergovernmental summit (cooperatives is needed over the city borders), may-day, a long term campaign concerning housing and everything that goes with it (property, production and consumption, playgrounds,...). For all this the theme groups can deliver information and knowledge (raw information or well-thought of propositions, the role of an info centre, where actuality is kept can make a lot of work redundant).

Discussions in your neighbourhood and community will become an important task (and knowing what the movement wants to do with it will be an absolute necessity). It will depend on the situation how this will come to stand through community-meetings, enquiries, visits to the pub,...

From these groups forward three ends can be reached (apart from the parallel political structure, which is the priority):

- education, action and information / discussion

economics trough LETS-groups and through influence in the companies vested there to restore social tissue by organising a number of activities and mutual aid

d. Economically

I propose the long-term constitution of two pillars of economic organization. Important are the following three:

to be capable to get involved in class war, minimum demands and notification

to take over the world in case the old system collapses (stockmarket crash, revolution,...)

to work on alternative economic forms, to gain experience and to show the achievability of it all.

In the first place a union should be founded, following the example of the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.) or the Confederación Nacional de Trabajo (C.N.T. / F.A.I.).

It is important to have a struggle organization that can organise the economy (production, distribution, consumption) if needed. For this it can use the knowledge of its members and the communication-structures of her organization.

I seriously doubt the possibility of doing this throughout the existing unions, though maybe we can gain experience and make contacts within these structures.

On the other hand alternative economic projects should be started to gain experience in 'self management', to set an example and as continuing experiments which can develop our knowledge further.

It is even possible that these companies would serve as a school or schools for 'self management' can be found (after the example of Mondragón in Spain).

Next to that LETS-groups can be founded (cfr. Politics), consumption cooperatives can be

build, common materials can be bought and controlled, food collectives, collective kitchens,...

e. Cohesion

Mutual cohesion can be on one-hand informal through affinity groups and on activities of the different groups: benefits, gigs, debates,...

We can, on the other hand, representants can be sent and deliberations and meetings summoned. This can be interthematically and geographically (locally, regionally, nationally, globally).

The mutual contact must contain formation and exchange of information, practical organization and collective planning, theoretical discussion, mutual solidarity and support.

Another kind of cohesion can be organised through alarm- and mobilisation-lines: through telephone or internet people and organizations can be informed of urgent or other important things and events.

Still another important element can be a shared or common infrastructure: newspapers (local and international) can work together; information centres; action centres; distributors of anarchist information and propaganda; printers and publishers; all kind of autonomous zones (squats,...); (mobile) food kitchens; ...

It must be said that different aspects can find a place under one roof or in one project. The most important thing is that each project should engage itself in this community. There

is only one way to the future: walk all paths at the same time.

B. TACTICAL ENDS.

We look for priorities. Each context shall point to other priorities: even each town or village has a context of its own and its own power diagram; a different social basis to build on;...

Overall it seems important to work on infrastructure / communication, combined with (communicating and related!) action campaigns and -groups.

Education, discussion and the psychological aspect to revolutionary struggle are not to be neglected.

C. OPERATIONAL ENDS.

We can say even less about the operational ends groups and individuals must put before them. We could say we must try for efficiency and effectivity. Our means are often limited by all kinds of factors.

We must try to stay in contact with the rest of the movement. Therefore the agenda of each group could contain:

- * practical things of the group itself

- * practical things of the movement at large: current discussions, urgent events,...

- * education, role-playing (think of all kinds of situations relevant for your group of movement: what if, how, who, what, when,...) or in-depth evaluation of general issues.

There must on the other hand not be too many meetings; they must be feasible in duration,

moment, location, ... as well as process (good preparation -for the group and individually-, a meaningful agenda, good facilitation,...). This way the meetings can be motivating and as much time as possible is free for the actual work, one's own life and social activities. Pay attention to the balance between the need for consensus and the space for initiative and trust; good arrangements make good friends. This also makes it possible for people to conduct other activities like (wage-)labour, kids, sports,... We

1. Non-violent 'social defence'

The only solution anarchist see possible for the social and individual problems is a social revolution. Nowadays large parts of the renewing ideas about the social struggle have a non-violent background. Apart from the principal discussion about violence it has to be clear that the action techniques developed by this current are mostly the same as the ones that should be used by anarchists. A social revolution is at least for the largest part a work of construction and peaceful co-operation. It is true that people like Gene Sharp consider both state and capital as valuable partners, view anarchists can hardly share. Sharp's frame of thoughts isn't an anarchist one, so neither are his methods. This however, doesn't make the rest of his thoughts less valuable. 'If I have to choose between violence and non-violence, I choose non-violence. If I have to choose between

violence and cowardness / ineffectiveness, I choose violence.’ (Gandhi).

More-over, reality shows that all too often we do need the peaceful methods as proclaimed by this ‘reformist current’. Therefore we must not abdicate from them, but learn to evaluate them in real life and use them wisely and without illusions. Moreover, we must be aware and value other means of struggle, but this is not the time or place to discuss them at length. Read military schoolbooks if you like, but you won’t find the revolution in them.

Brian Martin in ‘Social defence, social change’

Defining social defence

Social defence is non-violent community resistance to aggression as an alternative to military defence. It is based on widespread protest, persuasion, noncooperation and intervention in order to oppose military aggression or political repression. It uses methods such as boycotts, acts of disobedience, strikes, demonstrations and setting up alternative institutions.

Defining something is a political act, and so it is worthwhile looking at this definition of social defence as “non-violent community resistance to aggression as an alternative to military defence.”

This definition says that the resistance is community resistance—not national resistance, which is the usual focus for military defence and for much thinking and writing about social defence. My view is that the focus should be on communities defending

themselves and each other. Sometimes the communities will be nations, but often not.

Some activists prefer to define social defence as “non-violent community resistance to aggression or oppression,” thereby including defence against military aggression, defence against government oppression of local communities, and defence against male violence against women. Social defence, in this view, should be seen as non-violent defence of the vital features of society—including human rights, local autonomy, and participation—against all oppressive forces.

I agree with the sentiments behind this broader orientation. But I think it is better to define social defence as an alternative to military defence and then to make links between this idea of social defence and other struggles against oppression. With the broader definition, social defence becomes almost the same as any community-based non-violent action. This can lose the focus on the problems with military defence.

Of course, there is a very close connection between social defence and non-violent action: social defence is based on the use of non-violent action. Social defence means that the functions of the military are eliminated or replaced (or, at the very least, supplemented). There can be lots of non-violent action in a community but, if the military is still present, there is the potential for waging war and carrying out repression.

Social defence is one of several different names that all mean about the same thing. The main ones are social defence, non-violent

defence, civilian-based defence and civilian defence. The different names do have different connotations. The expression "civilian based defence" usually refers to non-violent defence operating under direction of a government, whereas the expression "social defence" often refers to non-violent defence based on grassroots initiatives.

Years ago, social defence was sometimes called "passive resistance." This gives the misleading impression that non-violence is passive. The core of social defence is non-violent action, and this includes strikes, fraternisation and setting up alternative institutions.

There are also offensive measures to be taken, such as communications to undermine international and domestic support for the aggression. Social defence does not mean just sitting there and accepting whatever the aggressor inflicts. "Social defence" and the main alternative terms include the word "defence." Ironically, this gives too narrow a view of what can be involved. The problem stems from the euphemism "military defence." Military forces are designed for war. Government departments of war changed their names to departments of defence in order to avoid the association with killing and destruction.

"Defence" sounds much friendlier than war, the military or even "the army."

Non-violence has the opposite problem: to many people it sounds weak. Social defence sounds purely defensive. That's why it's sometimes useful to talk of social offence.

198 Methods of non-violent action

Gene Sharp, the leading researcher on non-violent action, has identified 198 different types of non-violent action and given examples of each one.¹ Sharp divides the methods of non-violent action into three categories: symbolic actions, noncooperation, and intervention and alternative institutions.

Symbolic actions include:

formal statements (speeches, letters, petitions); slogans, leaflets, banners; rallies, protest marches, vigils, pickets; wearing of symbols of opposition (such as the paper clips worn by Norwegian civilians during the Nazi occupation); meetings, teach-ins.

Noncooperation includes:

social boycott, stay-at-home; boycotts by consumers, workers, traders; embargoes; strikes, bans, working-to-rule, reporting "sick"; refusal to pay tax or debts, withdrawal of bank deposits; boycotts of government institutions; disobedience, evasions and delays; mock incapability ("misunderstandings," "mistakes").

Intervention and alternative institutions include:

fasts; sit-ins, non-violent obstruction and occupation; destruction of information and records; establishment of parallel institutions for government, media, transport, welfare, health and education.

(From: Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Non-violent Action* (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1973).

a. The methods of non-violent protest and persuasion.

Formal statements

Public speeches 2. Letters of opposition or support 3. Declarations by organizations and institutions 4. Signed public statements 5. Declarations of indictment and intention 6. Group or mass petitions.

Communications with a wider audience

7. Slogans, caricatures and symbols 8. Banners , posters, displayed communications 9. Leaflets, pamphlets and books 10. Newspapers and journals 11. Records, radio and television 12. Skywriting and earth writing

Group representations

13. Deputations 14. Mock awards 15 Group lobbying 16. Picketing 17 Mock elections

Symbolic Public Acts

18. Displays of flags and symbolic colours 19. Wearing of symbols 20. Prayer and worship 21. Delivering symbolic objects 22. Protest disrobing 23 Destruction of own property 24. Symbolic lights 25. Displays of portraits 26. Paint as protest 27. New signs and names 28. Symbolic sounds 29. Symbolic reclamations 30. Rude gestures.

Pressures on individuals

31 “haunting” officials 32. Taunting officials 33. Fraternization 34. Vigils

Drama and music

35. Humorous skits and pranks 36 Performances of plays and music 37. Singing

Processions

38. Marches 39. Parades 40. Religious processions 41. Pilgrimages 42. Motorcades

Honouring the Dead

43. Political mourning 44. Mock funerals 45. Demonstrative funerals 46. Homage at burial places

Public assemblies

47. Assemblies of protest and support 48. Protest meetings 49. Camouflaged meetings of protest 50. Teach-ins

Withdrawal and renunciation

51. Walk-outs 52. Silence 53. Renouncing honours 54. Turning one's back

The methods of social noncooperation

Ostracism of persons

55. Social Boycot 56. Selective social boycott 57. Lysistratic nonaction 58. Excommunication 59. Interdict

Noncooperation with social events, Customs and institutions

60. Suspension of social and sports activities 61. Boycott of social affairs 62. Student strike 63. Social disobedience 64. Withdrawal from social institutions

Withdrawal from the social system

65. Stay at home 66. Total personal non-cooperation 67. Flight of workers 68. Sanctuary 69. Collective disappearance 70. Protest emigration

The methods of economic noncooperation : economic boycotts

Actions by consumers

71. Consumers' boycott 72. Nonconsumption of boycotted goods 73. Policy of austerity 74. Rent withholding 75. refusal to rent 76.

National consumers' boycott 77. International consumers' boycott

Action by workers and producers

78. Workmens' boycott 73. Producers boycott

Action by middlemen

80. Suppliers' and handlers' boycott

Action by Owners and management

81. Traders' boycott 82. Refusal to let or sell property 83. Lockout 84. Refusal of industrial assistance 85. Merchants "general strike"

Action by holders of financial resources

86. Withdrawal of bank deposits 87. Refusal to pay fees, dues and assessments 88. Refusal to pay debts or interest 89. Severance of funds and credit 90. Revenue refusal 91. Refusal of government's money

Action by governments

92. Domestic embargo 93. Blacklisting of traders 94. International sellers' embargo 95. International buyers' embargo 96. International trade embargo

The methods of economic noncooperation : The strike

Symbolic strikes

97. Protest strikes 98. Quickie walkout (lightning strike)

Agricultural strikes

99. Peasant strike 100. Farm Workers' strike.

Strikes by special groups

101. Refusal of impressed labour 102. Prisoners' strike 103. Craft strike 104. Professional strike

Ordinary Industrial Strikes

105. Establishment strike 106. Industry strike 107. Sympathetic strike

Restricted strikes

108. Detailed strike 109. Bumper strike 110. Slowdown strike 111. Working-to-rule strike 112. Reporting 'sick' (sick-in) 113. Strike by resignation 114. Limited strike 115. Selective strike

Multi-Industry Strikes

116. Generalized strike 117. General strike

Combination of Strikes and Economic Closures

118. Hartal 119. Economic shutdown

The methods of political noncooperation

Rejection of Authority

120. Withholding or withdrawal of allegiance 121. Refusal of public support 122. Literature and speeches advocating resistance

Citizens' Noncooperation with Government

123. Boycott of legislative bodies 124. Boycott of elections 125. Boycott of government employment and positions 126. Boycott of government departments, agencies and other bodies 127. Withdrawal from government educational institutions 128. Boycott of government-supported organizations 129. Refusal of assistance to enforcements agents 130. Removal of own signs and place marks 131. Refusal to accept appointed officials 132. Refusal to dissolve existing institutions

Citizens' Alternatives to Obedience

133. Reluctant and slow compliance 134. Non-obedience in absence of direct supervision 135. Popular non-obedience 136. Disguised disobedience 137. Refusal of an assemblage or meeting to disperse 138. Sit-down 139. Noncooperation with conscription and deportation 140. Hiding, escape, and false

identities 141. Civil disobedience of 'illegitimate' laws

Action by Government Personnel

142. Selective refusal of assistance by government aides 143. Blocking of lines of command and information 144. Stalling and obstruction 145. General administrative noncooperation 146. Judicial noncooperation 147. Deliberate inefficiency and selective noncooperation by enforcement agents 148. Mutiny

Domestic Government Action

149. Quasi-legal evasions and delays 150. Noncooperation by constituent governmental units

International Government Action

151. Changes in diplomatic and other representation 152. Delay and cancellation of diplomatic events 153. Withholding of diplomatic recognition 154. Severance of diplomatic relations 155. Withdrawal from international organizations 156. Refusal of membership in international bodies 157. Expulsion from international organizations

The methods of Non-violent Intervention

Psychological Intervention

158. Self-exposure to the elements 159. The fast (a. Fast of moral pressure; b. Hunger strike; c. Satyagrahic fast) 160. Reverse trial 161. Non-violent harassment

Physical Intervention

162. Sit-in 163. Stand-in 164. Ride-in 165. Wade-in 166. Mill-in 167. Pray-in 168. Non-violent raids 169. Non-violent air raids 170. Non-violent invasion 171. Non-violent

interjection 172. Non-violent obstruction 173.

Non-violent occupation

Social Intervention

174. Establishing new social patterns 175.

Overloading of facilities 176. Stall-in 177

Speak-in 178. Guerrilla theatre 179.

Alternative social institutions 180. Alternative communications system

Economic Intervention

181. Reverse strike 182. Stay-in strike 183.

Non-violent land seizure 184. Defiance of blockades 185. Politically motivated

counterfeiting 186. Preclusive purchasing 187.

Seizure of assets 188. Dumping 189. Selective patronage 190. Alternative markets 191.

Alternative transport systems 192. Alternative economic institutions

Political Intervention

Overloading of administrative systems 194.

Disclosing identities of secret agents 195.

Seeking imprisonment 196. Civil disobedience of 'neutral' laws 197. Work-on without

collaboration 198. Dual sovereignty and parallel government

2. (Consensus) decision making

***Strategy:**

Starting point: vision is means is goal!!! Put in another way: the means with whom we want to reach a certain goal have to be compliant with the vision we have on man, society and the ends we aim for. The end never justifies the means.

Strategy: coherent, well-considered and planned whole of activities and actions, aiming to realise the ends of a movement or campaign within a certain period of time.

Long - term strategy takes about 3 to 5 years.

Medium - long-term strategy takes about 1 to 2 years. Tactics is a short-term strategy or handling method. A time schedule is a way to plan the duration of the strategy.

The end is the end

Main goal: is an important and concretely formulated part concerning the ends (it's a sub-end). Campaigning goal, program goal, or strategic goals are the main goals.

Goal of action: is a goal to work towards to, (directed from the main goal), concretely formulated and possible to realise on a short-term bases

Goal of object: is a factory, a dumpsite, a power plant,...

Hinge point: is an organization that has a (relative) power equilibrium, which therefore becomes a turning point

Ways of influencing: are press, schools, medics, parents, acquaintances, ...

Sources: own participants, members of equal minded organizations or closely related organizations,...

To achieve goal you need people, time and money. These are needed in the right amounts and relations: a lot of time, no money and few people restricts the goals you can achieve.

Medium long and long-term strategy

What is your vision on the subject of the campaign? You have to formulate it as clear

as possible. State the connection between your vision and the subject: theme of the movement (or the campaign).

What are the ends of the movement or what are the ends of the campaign? What are the concrete main goals that have to be achieved in order to realise the ends of the movement or campaign?

What are your most important action- or campaign goals and how are you planning to use them? Put them in an order of escalation and importance. Make a distinction between direct and indirect goals.

What hinge points and ways of influencing do you want to use in what relation to which action-or campaigning goal?

Formulate concrete action goals for and with your resources. Put them in an order of importance.

Make a time schedule on which you can see what your ends, main goals, campaigning-and action-goals, hinge-points and resources are. In other words, convert your tactics and strategy into a real plan.

*** Flow chart**

The ends are well described.

After force-analysis (organigram of organizations and groups that have a positive or negative influence on your own group, project or campaign, and where there relative power can be shown), you have to decide on what force you have to work first.

Force-analysis can be split up in 'time-spirit' and 'network analysis'. Your organization

can't influence the factors related to time-spirit: rise of nationalism,... The network-analysis is visualised by circles around a centre (the organization): suppliers (of information), comrades, opponents ('address group'), contributors, financial support,...

What kind of action will we organise? A flowchart can help us to:

on a short term bases, in a clearly put way and with less chance to end up in endless discussions

sum up actions (brainstorm), consider the consequences of each action and choose (a) way(s) of action.

For example:

End	ACTIE	CONSEQUENTI ES
Equal sports facilities for women	Occupation of the gym	-if this is your first step, you will probably loose support and sympathy (-) -makes clear that you are serious (+) -possibility of arrests (-)
	Petition at school	- will probably change nothing (-) -creates possibilities for conversation / discussion (+)
	Publishing relevant pages from the constitutional law	- there is no money (-) -it takes more time (-) - difficult language that will need explaining (-)

		- gives a legal character to your action (++)
--	--	---

Imagine the petition at school is the first chosen action, than you can redo you flow chart while the petition is circling around. The way of working is the same.

Action	Action	Consequences
Petition at school.	Info magazine about the problem and suggestions for a solution.	- (-) - (+) - (++) - (-)
	Inviting female Olympic champions.	- (++) - (-) - (-)
	Involving male athletes	- (-)
	Occupation of the gym	- (++) - (--) - (-) - (+) - (-)

***Time schedule:**

Everything that has to be done (or has to be finished) for a certain action is put on one time-line (it is possible to split up in e.g. funding, file-and presswork, action preparation / training of those taking part in the action, juridical work,). Remind the mutual connections: a juridical working group only knows what to do when you have decided on which action techniques you are going to use,....

Gives a clear and estimated time planning.

It's practical to use.

*** SWOT - ANALYSIS:**

Strategic orientation:

Find out how wide the field of possibilities and action is. No decisions are taken yet, but try to get a good view on what's still to be discussed. You don't have to be complete, but try to know roughly what has to be discussed to reach a result.



Gathering and summing up of available information, internal as well as external.



A. EXTERNAL	B. INTERNAL
Imagine as many Threats and Opportunities as possible	Imagine as many Strengths and Weaknesses as possible.
Consider the threats (-1, -2) and opportunities (+1, +2) and bring them down to a max. of 6 (in small groups).	Consider the weaknesses (-1, -2) and strengths (+1, +2) and bring them down to a max. of 6 (in small groups).

(Collect the results of the small groups and restrict your lists to a maximum of 8)

Put them next to each other:

	EXTERNAL	Opportunity	...	Opportunity	...	Threat (-1)	...	Threat (-2)	...
INTERNAL									
Strength (+2)									
Strength (+1)									
...									
...									
Weakness (-2)									
Weakness (-1)									
...									
...									



Choose three problematic fields:

internal (-2) connect to external (-2) are an urgent priority! E.g. too few people (internal) combined with too few possible people (external) is a huge problem. Too few people (internal) combined with a lot of possible people (external) is an important, but totally different problem.

Don't forget to keep track of your strong points. They are often matters that you can and must use and start your project from!

↓
Work on this problematic fields:

This can be done in smaller groups You can repeat this entire process for the sub problems until all problems are identified so that you can begin to reach solutions.

↓
Collect solutions and try to make a realistic plan. (who, when, what, how, what, money, ...)
↓

Evaluate the process regularly and redirect it if needed.

***Discussion procedures :**

There are an infinite number of variables possible. What's most important is to be aware of the group, the process and the results.

***Why consensus:**

Direct democracy, everyone decides along
Everyone is responsible for the result, and it is acted out better

Decisions are made starting from the importance of the whole: win / win situation

Decisions are made starting in full trust of each other

Information / knowledge / know-how / skills are being shared

Everyone's opinion is important and should be heard

Consensus breaks through the dictatorship of the majority

Consensus stimulates involvement and creativity

***A number of examples:**

-Tasks to be done in the process.

All members of the group are responsible for the tasks of the person who guides the conversations: helping each other, supporting, keeping attention, looking together for a next step, really listening to others, being prepared to let go of own ideas and considering new ones, changing opinion and thinking along creatively...

The individual needs and thoughts have to be compared to what's right for the group and the purpose of the meeting. We have to try to understand and be understandable. This is the opposite of repeating each other's view or getting involved in endless discussions.

Guidelines :

Don't try to convince others of your own view at any cost. Do explain in a logical and clear manner whatever your opinion is. Listen carefully to others and consider their reactions.

Don't change your opinion to avoid conflict or to reach a solution faster. Only support the solution that you agree with.

Avoid conflict-reducing techniques such as majority voting, tossing,...

Try to find out what the conflicting opinions are. Be especially aware of the different starting points.

Everyone is responsible for gaining a solution. Try to involve everyone in the discussion.

Consider the different opinions as an advantage, rather than a disadvantage when looking for consensus. The opinions are sources of information, which makes the chance of reaching a good solution for the group bigger.

Avoid looking at the discussion as if it were a competition. It's not the intention to have a winner and a loser. Instead, we have to look for an acceptable alternative for all members of the group.

Consensus is the result of the combination of information, logic and feelings.

The person that guides the discussion has various tasks but the responsibility for the course and the result of meeting always lies with the group. There are a couple of issues that the one who guides the conversation watches over. Some of these issues can be delegated to others (e.g. keeping the time, reformulating or summing up what's been said,...).

Formulating what's been said and questioning if everyone agrees

making sure everyone can have a say

making sure everyone can follow the conversation

Helps to state clearly what people mean by asking questions or repeating what's

important (and questioning whether this is correct)

Asking for the opinion of the silent ones

Not allowing the conversation to wander off

Make sure the discussion progresses

Making clear summaries

Keeping the spirits up by organising a game, a break, opening a window,...

Being visible and understandable for everyone.

The one who guides the conversation cannot be prejudiced in the conversation. When he / she is too much involved or when he / she's too tired, it can be wise to ask someone else to take over.

The timekeeper makes sure that the agreed on time per subject is respected. The meeting decides.

The note taker takes care of the reports, and may sum up what's been said during the meeting. Someone can write important remarks on a large sheet of paper or blackboard, so these remarks are easy to get back too, something like a real-time report that can be continuously consulted and adjusted. It might be necessary to provide translation.

It's possible (depending on the situation) to use 'runners' who can keep contact between the different groups and deliver information during the course of the meeting. They don't make decisions. When you use a 'fishbowl' (see further in the text) spokesman take up more or less the same role.

***Regular consensus :**

(model from the reader 'Training for trainers'.)
Prepare the meeting (agenda, viewpoints, gather information,...).

Choose a person to guide the conversation.

Agenda (why is a subject on the agenda, what's the purpose: deciding or exploring,...).

Orientation phase (background of the subject, reason, emergency,...).

Information phase (to bring all information explicitly in the group, no manipulation / monopoly).

Opinion forming phase (round of opinions, brainstorm (time limit!), advantages / disadvantages and solutions, achievability of the ideas, best ideas on blackboard (idea, advantage, disadvantage, solution, advantage, disadvantage), discussion while keeping the contents and emotions in mind, maybe interrupted by a game)

This will lead to a unanimously formulated proposal!

Decision-making phase: are we all in favour? Who has objections? A quick summary of agreements and differences. Asking everyone personally! When people object it's important to ask what their objections are.

When there 's a difference of opinions, the danger is real that those who don't agree with the proposal will stay rejectively silent or will keep on repeating their objections. Ask if the objections concern the entire proposal or whether there are parts of it that can be agreed on. When they disagree with the entire proposal these persons can be asked to formulate their own proposal. It may be

useful to have the discussion again while thinking how to change, improve or adjust the proposal. It may be necessary to take a break first, to play a game or to have a moment of silence to think. The decision can be postponed. Never postpone a decision lightly: agree on what has to be done in the meantime (e.g. a group can summarise two proposals into one). If the group insists on making a decision the objecting person can be asked not to block the decision. People who don't agree with a decision can't be forced to execute it! If all this fails the objecting person can decide to leave the group. Don't drop this person! When there are real problems there's probably something else going on, be aware of this. People might feel that they're never taken seriously, people might be afraid of a situation,... To end: it may not be impossible that one person sees clearer what's best for the entire group!!

**Model from 'Conflict and consensus' by C.T. Butler (co- founder of Food Not Bombs).*

-INTRODUCTON:

Clarify process

Present proposal or issue

Questions to clarify the presentation

-BROAD OPEN DISCUSSION

Group discussion

Different techniques:

-Identification: (address each other by name, this can be made possible by playing games, name cards, systematically announcing your name before you speak,...)

-Discussions with the whole group to reach an idea supported by the group (unstructured or structured).

Discussions in small groups who then report their findings through spokesmen / reporters.

Have rounds: 'I agree on what's been said' isn't enough, what exactly do you agree on, what not? This is not a time for discussion, listen carefully to what other people are saying and try to find out what everybody (including yourself) wants.

-Fishbowl: participants with a different opinion sit in a circle to discuss while the others form the outer circle and listen. At the end the group gets together again and evaluates the fishbowl discussion.

→Call for consensus

Identify concerns

List any concerns

Group related concerns

Resolve concerns

Resolve grouped concerns

→call for consensus?

Restate Remaining concerns

Questions to clarify concerns

Discussion limited to resolving one concern at a time)

→call for consensus

Alternative closing options

Stand aside

Send to committee

'declare block': no consensus can be reached: postpone to a next meeting and continue with the agenda.

Equal sharing of participation

- keeping a list of people that want to speak (chronologically)
- if many people want to speak at the same time, ask them to raise hands and call a number (1,2,3,4,...), then you can allow them to speak in that order
- if the meeting stops or a few people are dominating it then everyone is free to question the discussion technique and propose an alternative
- if the meeting goes too fast or when tension rises a moment of silence might help
- everyone can "call for consensus"
- making a summary of what's been said, what everyone agrees on and what's still to be discussed
- restate the proposal
- explicitly quit your guiding role when you want to say something about the contents
- a non-binding 'referendum' by hand raising: ONLY to see how deep the differences in opinions are
- censorship: when someone speaks before his turn, interrupts somebody, keeps repeating himself,... this person can be censored for the duration of an item on the agenda or even longer, in really extreme cases someone can be excluded. Both censorship and exclusion can only take place after the person has thoroughly been questioned and after you've tried to find a solution.

*EVALUATION:

There are at least ten ways in which evaluation helps improve meetings. Evaluations:

- * improve the process by analysis of what happened, why it happened, and how it might be improved

- * examine how certain attitudes and statements might have caused various problems and encourage special care to prevent them from recurring

- * foster a greater understanding of group dynamics and encourage a method of group learning or learning from each other

- * allow the free expression of feelings

- * expose unconscious behaviour or attitudes which interfere with the process

- * encourage the sharing of observations and acknowledge associations with society

- * check the usefulness and effectiveness of techniques and procedures

- * acknowledge good work and give appreciation to each other

- * reflect on the goals set for the meeting and whether they were attained

- * examine various roles, suggest ways to improve them, and create new ones as needed

- * provide an overall sense of completion and closure to the meeting

Try to separate different aspects: always make clear what you observed and what part you concluded by interpreting. Start saying what you think you heard or saw and ask if you heard or saw this right. Only after this give your interpretation and ask again if you are correct.

Process:

Individual round: how did I feel, how did I act and why? How did I experience the others?

Were all roles well fulfilled?

Were the procedures respected?

Was there enough attention for non-verbal communication? Was the food good? ...

Product:

Is the result an answer to the right questions (Most of the times -but not always- the ones from the agenda)?

Was there a real and free consensus? Was there pressure? Were fundamental discussion forgotten or evaded? Does everyone really back-up the decisions?

***Fast consensus (e.g. during actions)**

Choosing a clear form of fast decision making can mean that you must act out trust at difficult times. It will prevent people with a lot of dominance - but who don't have everybody's trust- from deciding what will happen. It is meant to help executing the action out of the unity of the group.

state a proposal (bases on scenarios that have been worked out in advance), let everyone answer at the same time by letting them raise a number of fingers (try hiding your communication from the police):

1 finger (thumb) = I agree with the proposal, no objections

2 fingers = I object but I will participate

3 fingers = I object, I won't participate but you go ahead

4 fingers = I object and I don't want you to continue the action either (depending on agreements in advance and the situation this option might be left out).

If necessary a new proposal can be stated

A larger group can be split up in to smaller groups that have to come to a collective answer in the same manner.

In some situations it's better to work with fast deciders: according to previously developed scenarios one or a few people decide. It has to be clear in advance in what kind of situations these fast deciders can take action. When these situations don't occur the group continues to decide collectively.

When fast deciders have had to decide it's important to discuss afterwards how this felt for the group and for the decision makers themselves, and what the results for the action were. If we work with fast deciders this means that the group:

- has to trust the fast deciders, is prepared to act out decisions, stays critical towards the decisions, can give an own opinion when others or the action are in danger, remains independent and keeps its own responsibility.

The fast deciders have a great responsibility to take. If he or she has to make a decision during the course of the action she / he as a huge influence on the further course of the action. It is easy to confuse this task with leadership.

***Friendship groups** (nuclear groups, base groups, support groups, affinity-groups) are small groups, ten to fifteen people, who know and support each other. These groups join regularly, prepare their share in an action together and divide the various tasks within the group. Therefore during the course of the action they know where they stand and they can cooperate. The group also meets when an action is over to discuss what went wrong and right during the action. An action always means unexpected and exciting events. It's important that the participants feel safe in the group. The structure of friendship groups makes this safety possible and it forms the bases for collective responsibility for the action. Three aspects should certainly be dealt with in a friendship group:

Building trust

by giving trust, by sharing experiences, by asking people how they feel, by asking in what way you can support each other during an action, by listening carefully and understanding what the other is trying to say. This looking after each other is everybody's duty. Sometimes a few, sometimes only women, who are more used to giving personal attention to their surroundings, only fulfill this task. But as much before, during and after an action people should look after each other. (Before: consulting about 'what have you got with you? What is your task? , How are you feeling?, What do you need?. During: sharing of food and drinks, trading places, asking who needs what, playing games and singing songs,

... After: give people the chance to tell their story, don't start discussing this immediately. Everyone's experience is important. Confirm each other on this. Tell each other what you saw of them, talk to them about it. Tell them if you were proud of someone, if you felt support,...

Expressing emotions :

Expressing emotions is important. Hold back emotions will block you. We are all afraid to show our emotions. A lot of us have the feeling that we can't even show them anymore. When we are acting out an action, there's always stress. Stress builds up emotions. We are scared, angry, disappointed, inspired, astonished, irritated,... When our emotions are directed at the opponents it's logical that they can be vented in our group, you can share your emotions and get over them. When our emotions are directed towards members of our own group, it's a lot more difficult. When you feel left alone by someone of your group during an action or when you are irritated by another members' behaviour, this can paralyse and isolate you. Try to put your feelings into words immediately and agree on discussing them when the action is over.

Dealing with criticism

Receiving criticism is difficult. Having direct criticism is difficult too. We often keep it to ourselves: the risk of not being understood is too big. So we just tell one or two others how obnoxious we think a certain person is. This

becomes gossip and this leads to distrust. It's the responsibility of the entire group to lead such a situation to a good end. The other members of the group have the task to make sure that none of the parties involved is left out in the cold. Both parties must receive enough space to say what they want to say: both must feel support and feel included in the group. When you are giving or receiving criticism, you must think of the following: speak for yourself: 'I find it difficult if you..., because,...'

concretely state what you're criticism is about: 'when you... then you...'

When you are receiving criticism listen to the other person and say: 'I heard that you felt..., I feel uneasy about this because...'

When you are receiving criticism don't start defending yourself immediately but try to listen to and acknowledge everything the other states first, afterwards you can tell your side of the story

At the end ask if things are out of the way or if something is left to be done before you can continue working together

Ask the other members of the group about their feelings towards this conversation.

***IN GENERAL:**

-Consensus is based on:

trust

respect

unity of goals

non-violence

self-reinforcement

cooperation
conflict management and -solving
dedication to the group
active participation
equal access to power
patience
preparation and preparedness

-Threats to consensus:

 lack of training
 external hierarchical structures
(hidden) internal hierarchical relations or
substructures (read Jo Freeman's 'the tyranny
of structurelessness')
 social prejudice

-Always make sure there is a balance between the business and the personal. This goes for meetings too.

-Regularly form smaller groups to go deeper into the personal opinions of everyone.

-Listen carefully to what people say. This not only means that you let people talk until they are finished (which appears quite a task on its own). It also means you relate to what people say... that you ask questions and make the meeting happen and get to thinking along together.

-Regularly do a round. Everyone says something of him -or herself. It can or cannot be related to the specific topic you're discussing. It is important that everyone there is briefly looked at and listened to.

-Organize an interlude: play a game, sing a song,... You connect easier if you don't just talk but move your bodies too, watch each

other and touch each other. Don't feel funny about this.

-Be aware of the atmosphere in the group and discuss it if it slows down the moving on. Maybe you should open a window. There could be an argument starting to grow that you can anticipate in one way or another (which is not: avoid it at all costs!).

The goal of organizing is more than having a good time. It is a working at something, the preparation of a society in which people work toward change in an open meeting. That meeting always starts with ourselves. Today.

Don't be too easily discouraged if the consensus procedure doesn't work smoothly from the beginning. It can only work if we want to learn how to use it. In the longer run it will prove to result in better decisions and stronger group coherence.

* ROLEPLAYING

Role-playing is a necessary tool for activists.

First of all it helps individuals prepare for whatever is to happen next. You can think up different scenarios and different responses of yourselves and others. This improves meetings and attempts to think of a plan. Because everyone has thought of various things before you actually meet you gain time when you meet.

Second you don't even need a group to think about things. You can play different roles at once. Remember it's not a game you have to win, but a role-play from which you must learn.

On the other hand it is fun to do with a group. It is simply less boring than sitting in a chair and discuss dry stuff. You can imagine more freely and therefore more realistically about the chances things will evolve in one way or another. You can see clearly what information is missing, what crucial positions (social or otherwise) must be taken, what has to happen for this to be possible,...

You often get more results because the pressure seems off. More people can more easily be drawn into the process. It often makes it easier to subvert internal power play because the process is harder to control and people tend to be less impressed by authority than in a formal meeting.

It is easier to make room for fundamental or political / ethical discussions. Which is not to say they must be avoided outside a role-play, but these discussions are often unlikely to result in a formal consensus. Trying this too hard could lead to official formulations and diplomatic abracadabra.

It is a good way to exercise the processes above. Pick a subject you know for sure will have no far-reaching effects for your group or even some totally fun subject. You could try the consensus-model, the time-line and SWOT-analysis to choose a pub or a movie.

There is no list of subjects even imaginable. Everything relevant for you or your group can become subject for a role-play. Here are but a few typical examples.

*You could take a map of the city or region you're active in and set goals for the revolutionary movement while some of the players take the part of the bosses, the cops, the fascists, the Trotskyites,...

*You could imagine an industrial plant and try to figure out what it takes to take it over in workers' hands. What about the cops, what about selling the products (to whom, legal aspects,...),...

*You could imagine the next meeting of your group. You've been trying to say something for the past few weeks, but somehow you can't get through. Why? What are you trying to say? To whom? How? When? Is a formal meeting the right time and place? Is it the people? Is it the process? What do you need to be able to have your say? Who is in your way? Why? How? Is it you? How can you change yourself?

*You facilitate the next meeting. What will you say? What will you do? What's on the agenda? What information will or might be missing?

Note that role-playing is not a collecting of worst-case scenarios. Neither is it free from reality: you get nowhere imagining Martians coming to rescue you (although it could be fun as a game). It is an attempt to get a realistic view on what could happen and how to influence events or to evaluate alternative

scenario's for something that has already happened.

SO THIS IS A QUITE DIFFERENT ANARCHIST COOKBOOK THAN WHAT YOU MIGHT HAVE FOUND ELSEWHERE: no bombs and none of the other archetypical stuff you find in the anarchist cookbooks that are very often published by right-wing organisations trying to put the blame on us.

'You can't blow up a social relationship' says Tom Wetzel.

So how CAN we change our destiny if just bombing the place apart offers as little hope for us as it seems to do?

'Anarchy is Order - our anarchist cookbook' is our attempt to 're-re-reinvent anarchy (again)' as I guess we all should have an exercise ever so often, trying to formulate this complex planet in simple and solvable problems with realistic solutions (YEP).

We say it's easy to pretend to be cynical. It's easy to create evil empires and almighty molochs. It's easy to despair.

This booklet is an individual attempt to recall our history and draw lessons for the past. It is not new. I am not a genius. I am not a university professor.

I'm just trying to take what's in me onto the paper in order to make communication possible. I'm trying to summarize very practically all the tools and strategies anarchists have used. My main conclusion is

that we should work together -even if we do different things. Only an attack and defence with closed ranks and coordinated fronts will get us anywhere.